

July 12, 2007

RECEIVED

To: Chuck Oliver, Darby District Ranger
Darby Ranger District
P.O. Box 388
Darby, MT 59828

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Ravalli County Commissioners

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SUBJECT: Lost Horse Mine/Quarry

I am writing to strongly oppose the reopening of the Lost Horse Mine/quarry.

I find this one of the most egregious and outrageous assaults that I have ever heard of on a prime recreation area and key portal to the wilderness. I understand that Wilderness Areas have boundaries and beyond those boundaries, other rules apply, but the spirit of the wilderness zone lives adjacent to the wilderness. The Forest Service understands this spirit and establishes resultant restrictions when they feel like it. For example, the Forest Service is suggesting a ban on mountain bikes on the trail up Blue Joint, even though the traffic and impact are close to zero. But when it comes to making a really huge negative impact on recreation values, and making money along the way, then suddenly the Forest Service thinks that the idea is just dandy.

I live on the West Fork Road, not up Lost Horse, but the noise, pollution, and impact of a rock quarry will destroy the quality of living for the citizens of Lost Horse, and at the same time, jeopardize the safety of individuals and school busses on the Lost Horse Road.

I'm not sure why the Forest Service is supporting this quarry, but if you care only about money, not about people, economists at the University of Montana in Missoula have shown repeatedly that the economic foundation of the Bitterroot Valley is based on people who live in small communities, like Lost Horse. If the quarry is established, a tiny hierarchy of mine owners and executives will make a lot of money, a few workers will make a good wage, but, based on past studies, the economy of the valley itself will suffer.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this.

Sincerely,

Jon Turk
187 Christisen South Rd
Darby, MT 59829

cc: ✓ Glenda Wyles, Administrative Assistant

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